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II.—OUR SONG BIRDS.

BY BROTHER ALPHONSUS, C. S. C.

CATBIRD.

Dumetella carolinensis.

The Catbird, I think, may be placed next to the Brown-Thrasher as a songster. But it often mars its singing by introducing a cat-like call. Sometimes, however, the bird will sing without a discord. The catbird is an accomplished mimic, and often imitates other birds' notes to a nicety.

INDIGO BIRD.

Passerina cyanea.

Among the sweetest of all our song birds is this beautiful little blue bird. During the hot days of July, when most other birds are seldom heard, this charming songster will sing almost continuously, at the edge of some wood. The song gradually ceases towards the middle of August.

BROWN THRASHER.

Toxostoma rufum.

The Brown Thrasher is our finest song bird. On its arrival, sometimes as early as April 10, the bird begins to sing. Perched in a tree top and in full view of the observer, the Thrasher will pour forth melody that, for richness and variety, is unsurpassed by any other of our birds. The Thrasher stops singing about the first of July.

BLUEBIRD.

Sialia sialis.

The first note of early spring is the sweet warble of the Bluebird. The last week of February is sure not to pass without the arrival of the first Bluebirds, whose soft call-notes are heard as the birds fly or rest at the edge of some wood. A few days later, the Bluebirds' notes fill the fresh spring air.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

Icterus galbula.

The loud, whistling notes of the Baltimore Oriole are very conspicuous in May and June. Feeding in the tree tops, the bird will often stop to utter one or more of its rich notes. There is

considerable variety in the song of the male, and the same clear tones in the voice of the female. Most of the summer, a few notes may be heard, delivered in a less forcible manner.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD.

Agelaius phoeniceus.

The notes of this blackbird are clear and melodious, but have little variety. The bird's habitat is in swampy places, where its song may be heard a great way off. After the nesting season, the song is seldom heard, but a shrill whistle is given for a longer time.

(To be continued.)

EDITORIAL.

THINGS NEW AND OLD.

On more than one previous occasion we have found that so-called discoveries of our time had really been originally made several centuries ago. There has come to our notice now a work on "The Law of Sex-determination and Its Practical Application," by Laura A. Calhoun,* which may again illustrate the fact. Mrs. Calhoun has had much experience in California in breeding animals and proposes a theory of conditions that determined the sex of offspring. She proposed as the principal thesis the following:

"The sex of the embryo in man and the higher animals is determined in the ovary from which the ovum in question is developed. In the normal female, the ovary of the right side yields ova which on fertilization develop as males and the ovary of the left side yields ova which are potentially female."

Commenting on this, David Starr Jordan* states that "from this arises the practical deduction that sex can be determined at will through the service of gravitation. For the prospective mother to lie on the right side should ensure male offspring. To allow the spermatie fluid to flow to the left side means female offspring." Other theories of telegyny are proposed more or less scantily supported by facts. We have other theories with

* The Law of Sex-Determination and Its Practical Application", Laura A. Calhoun. The Eugenic Publishing Company, New York.

* Science, Vol. XXXIII., No. 846, p. 429., Friday, March 17, 1911.